



# Harbinger

SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER VOL. 18 NO. 4

My family and I like to play a little game. When we see a car pulled off on the roadside with the occupants out smelling and photographing wildflowers, we always double check to see if the license tags are out of state.

They typically are. While our roadside wildflowers *are* beautiful, surely no wise Missourian would have the courage to wade through the plants without protection! I often imagine I can hear the theme music to *Jaws* playing as the unsuspecting tourists frolic through the plants with no knowledge about the dangers lurking within.

While most people might immediately conjure up the image of snakes lying coiled up and ready to strike or of large garden spiders quietly waiting to catch their flying prey (or us) in their web, the real dangers are far less obvious. Ticks, chiggers, and poison ivy—while less threatening looking than snakes and spiders—are three of the biggest banes of summer in the Ozarks. While small, these summertime “dangers” can really limit outdoor activity unless, of course, you make sure you’re prepared.

A tick’s method of attack can best be described as sinister. You’ll never have any warning that they’re around you. They simply wait, and wait as long as it takes for a host to brush against them then they grab on and begin feeding on blood. Even their feeding goes unnoticed, and there’s nothing worse than finding a tick attached and quietly enjoying a meal on you—literally. Fortunately, most species limit their blood meal to only one a season and if a host isn’t available, they can go as long as three years between feedings. The larval ticks hatch out of eggs and climb to the top of tall grasses and wait in large groups for an unsuspecting host

to brush by. Because of their small size and sheer numbers, larval ticks are often called “seed” ticks.

Unlike ticks, chiggers don’t wait around for a host—they go after one. Even though these larval mites are only 1/150<sup>th</sup> of an inch in size, they can travel from shoe to waist in about 15 minutes. They travel your body looking for thin skin or folds of skin in which to attach their small mouthparts. Where they encounter an obstacle, like a waistband, that’s where they stay. They feed on dissolved skin tissue and leave behind a small feeding tube when they’re through dining. You won’t

feel the itch until 3 or 4 days after the chigger is gone and the itch may continue for up to 10 days! If you see a small red welt, it’s the feeding tube that is visible and not the chigger that is long gone!

Fortunately, these soft-bodied creatures can be repelled with insecticides and the same ones that repel chiggers will also repel ticks. (Always check the label to see if the repellent can be sprayed onto skin or is limited only to clothing.) It’s a good idea to wear long-sleeved, light-colored clothing so ticks can be seen. In addition, changing your clothes and showering as soon as possible after being outdoors and brushing against plants will help decrease the likelihood that these creatures will make a meal out of you. If you can’t shower, simply wiping down your body with a

towel will kill chiggers and stopping frequently for “tick checks” can prevent them from becoming attached.

Poison ivy rashes are probably one of the worst parts of summer. Whether hiking in the woods, climbing trees, enjoying roadside wildflowers, or weeding along a fence line, it’s possible to come into contact with this ubiquitous plant. If you’re not allergic to it now, it doesn’t mean that you won’t be in the future so everyone should take caution to avoid this plant. And while poison ivy doesn’t reach out and grab anyone, the oil on the plant can remain active for long periods of time on clothing, pet hair, garden tools, etc. Just coming in contact with the oil, and not the actual plant, is enough to cause many to break out in a rash. As with exposure to ticks and chiggers, changing your clothes and washing after potentially encountering this plant can help decrease the likelihood of a rash. The best way to avoid poison ivy rashes is to simply avoid the plant.

Join us, and KTTS, for a Family Fun Day on Tuesday, July 13, from 11am-12:30pm to learn more about outdoor hazards. Discover more ways to avoid ticks and chiggers, try your hand at a poison ivy IQ test, and learn how to identify venomous snakes and other hazards that compete with summer fun in the Ozarks. And make plans to bring the entire family to Insect-O-Rama on Friday, August 20, from 7-9pm to get the lowdown on lowly insects—from bugs that bug us to those that benefit us.

With a little precaution, you can enjoy Missouri’s great outdoors and avoid summertime pests. However, the next time you see folks walking around the roadsides, check to see if they’re from out of state. More than likely, they’re tourists who will have more than wildflower photographs as “souvenirs” to remember their roadside romp in Missouri. ~Linda Chorice

## A Trio of Pests

# Chipping In . . . Cole Chatman

This month we'd like to thank a talented individual who has been a steadfast feature at the nature center the last few years. He began as a Volunteer Naturalist with the class of 2001 and the following year was hired as a part-time general clerk. Cole Chatman's people skills deserve special recognition because of his outgoing personality and his ability to relate to people.

His personable character and positive attitude are two of the first traits you notice about Cole when entering the nature center. You may find him working the front desk nearly every weekend greeting visitors. He

enjoys working with the public by giving directions to local areas and by answering questions from identifying plants and animals to clarifying hunting and fishing regulations. He keeps informed of new regulations by attending meetings on Wildlife Code changes and volunteers for the Conservation Department's Protection Division and the Andy Dalton Shooting Range. As a Protection Volunteer, he is certified as a Hunter Education Instructor and has taught numerous classes across the state. He is also certified to teach shotgun and muzzleloader classes as well as

Missouri Bow Hunter Education. His ultimate goal is a career as a Conservation Agent and he is doing all the right things to gain the experience needed. He is pursuing a degree in Wildlife Conservation and Management and is due to graduate in December, 2004.

His special talents and flexibility make him a tremendous asset to the nature center and to the Conservation Department. An example of this could be seen when a last minute fill-in was needed for a puppet show. With only twenty minutes before the program was scheduled to begin, he agreed to help. Little did he know that he would be the main character, the Big-Mouthed Bullfrog, and perform without any rehearsal! Yet, he agreed, and his enthusiasm brought life to the bullfrog puppet and laughter to all the kids. His energy, talent, and flexibility proved invaluable to the success of the show.

The outdoors drew his interest at an early age while growing up in rural Poplar Bluff and he supports introducing kids of any age to conservation. His eagerness to work with kids is apparent in his role as Smokey Bear each year when he's dressed in full body costume for four hours and interacting with kids of all ages.

Whether behind a puppet stage, in a costume, or working the front desk, his outgoing personality and positive attitude are evident and are what make him a valuable employee and volunteer. The next time you visit the nature center and are greeted by Cole, please be sure to thank him for chipping in.

## The View From The Bridge

There's a new game in town that will be a treat to both Lewis & Clark enthusiasts and to those who like a good challenge. John Hoskins, Director of the Missouri Department of Conservation, is challenging Missourians to take their own exploration of our diverse state through *Journaling with Lewis & Clark-A Discovery of Outdoor Missouri*.

Missourians of all ages can visit a participating conservation area to pick up a journal and to complete a journal entry at a designated "Journal Stop." Each journal entry is rewarded with an animal stamp and a lapel pin featuring an animal that Lewis & Clark encountered in Missouri 200 years ago. Take your *Journaling with Lewis & Clark* booklet on your travels through Missouri creating your own outdoor memories and adventures.

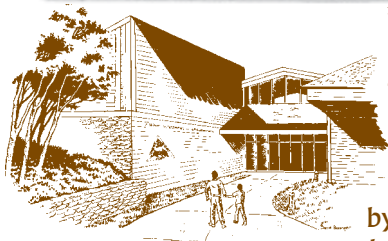
While Lewis & Clark were restricted to the Missouri River in their famed crossing, your journey will take you around the state. Your travels will include visits to Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center and the Discovery Center in the Kansas City area, to the St. Louis area to visit Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center and the newly-opened Columbia Bottom Conservation Area at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri River, to Runge Conservation Nature Center and Lost Valley Hatchery in mid-Missouri, and to Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery and the Springfield Conservation Nature Center in southwest Missouri. Visit all participating sites before May 31, 2005, and collect all eight pins! Completed journals can be sent to Jefferson City to be eligible for grand prize drawings.

While you won't encounter flocks of Carolina parakeets or herds of elk or bison, you will undoubtedly make discoveries that may be just as exciting to you as Lewis & Clark's were to the world. You are the explorers now. Go forth and discover outdoor Missouri.

*Linda* Linda F. Choric  
Nature Center Manager

## Volunteer Milestones

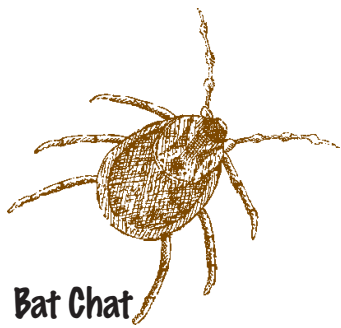
Sylvia Smith .....	1500 Hours
Dan Liles .....	500 Hours
Goose Gosnell .....	400 Hours
Cole Chatman .....	300 Hours
Tracy Richter .....	300 Hours
Larry Stuart .....	300 Hours
Joyce Tolliver .....	300 Hours
Steve Craig .....	200 Hours
Sally Inskeep .....	200 Hours
Shane Thomas .....	200 Hours



## Harbinger

In an effort to save both money and resources, we purge our newsletter mailing list periodically. If you signed up before May 15 to have the newsletter mailed to you and you wish to continue receiving it, you will need to return the card you received in the mail by July 15. If you don't return this card, you won't receive the September/October issue and we'll assume that you want your name removed from the mailing list. Thank you.





# July Events at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center

For programs requiring registration, call 888-4237.

Registration for all programs begins the first day of the month.

## 6 Bat Chat Tuesday, 7-8pm

Bats are mysterious and misunderstood creatures. Join Miranda Milam-Dunbar, SMSU graduate student, as she shares the results of her research to shed some light on these nocturnal mammals. Families. Registration required.

## 9 Babes In The Woods Goes Exploring Friday, 10-10:45am

Sacagawea and her baby survived the journey of discovery 200 years ago. Pack up your papoose (0-2 years old) for this guided trail adventure. Registration required.

## Nature Investigators Watersheds and Wetlands Friday, 4-5pm

Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart explains how wetlands are formed and how floodplains change in this session devoted to watersheds. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

## 10 For Adults Only Spelunker Spree Saturday, 9am-4pm

It's time to get down and dirty—down underground, that is. Exploring caves (or spelunking) is always an adventure. Be part of the fun by exploring two caves at nearby Fuson Conservation Area. Inquire about special instructions. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

## 11 Primitive Skills Series Making Cordage Sunday, 1-3pm

Primitive skills specialist Don Brink demonstrates how to weave plant fibers into cordage. Try your hand at this age-old skill and learn about the plants primitive man used.

## 13 KTTS Family Fun Day Tuesday, 11am-12:30pm

Do you get more bug bites than your line gets fish bites? If so, come learn about some of the outdoor hazards to watch for on your next outing. Then, go outside and try your hand at rod-and-reel casting hosted by Kids Are Special Too (KAST) professional fishermen. This family event is co-sponsored by KTTS radio station.

## 13 Medicinal and Edible Plants Of The Ozarks Tuesday, 6:30-8:30pm

Join Bob Liebert, owner of Teter Creek Herbs and author of *Common Medicinal Herbs Of The Ozarks*, to learn how Native Americans and early pioneers relied on plants for curing their ailments and feeding their families. Ages 12-adult. Registration required.

## 16 Nature Investigators We Need Wetlands Friday, 4-5pm

Join Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart as we investigate the importance of wetland habitats and learn how to protect these valuable natural communities. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

## Hiking Club Night Hike Friday, 7pm-1am

One of the best places to find nocturnal activity in midsummer is around an aquatic resource. We'll head to Stockton Lake for a three-mile lakeshore hike and end with a hotdog roast in celebration of the Hiking Club's second anniversary. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring water, a flashlight, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Registration required.

## 17 Conservation TEEN Club Cave Trip Saturday, 9am-5pm

Beat the heat with an underground retreat. A cool, damp cave is a great place to spend a hot summer day. We'll explore two caves at Fuson Conservation Area. Bring two flashlights with fresh batteries and wear boots with good traction and clothes you can get muddy. Lunch and transportation will be provided. Ages 12-17. Registration required.

## 18 Venomous Snakes of Missouri Sunday, 1-2pm

You've heard the tales about them, but now's your chance to hear the truth from Volunteer Naturalist Shane Thomas. We'll explore the myths and realities of pit vipers. Families.

## Venomous Snakes On Display Sunday, 2-4pm

Live specimens will be on display courtesy of Finley Valley Serpentarium.

## 22 Hiking Club Thursday, 6-9pm

Looking for a nearby hiking trail? Volunteer Naturalist Sally Inskeep will lead a three-mile hike at Fellows Lake. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Registration required.

## 23 Bored? Measure A Board Friday, 10-11:30am

Join Volunteer Naturalist Earl Niewald and use the tools of a forester to determine the volume of wood in a tree and other calculations. Meet at Living Memorial Park. Ages 9-12. Registration required.

## 24 Babes In The Woods And Bugs, Too Saturday, 11-11:45am

Grab your stroller and join the fun! You and your favorite Little Person (0-2 years old) will be introduced to the outdoors and the fascinating bugs of summer. Registration required.

## 25 Summer Hummers Sunday, 5-6:30pm

Join hummingbird bander Sarah Driver as she shares her knowledge about Missouri's smallest bird and attempts to capture and band some. Families. Registration required.

## 27 Conservation Kids' Club Just Like Lewis & Clark Tuesday, 7-8:15pm

Join us for the first of several programs celebrating Lewis & Clark. Learn about the importance of the bison, try your hand at journaling, and make a journal to take home with you. Ages 7-12 only. (Please, only one adult per group of kids.) Registration required.

## 29 Outdoor Skills Rendezvous Thursday, 6-8pm

Learn and practice your skills of fire starting, archery, fishing, and simulated hunting. We'll provide the supplies for each skill. Meet at the Logan-Rogersville Fire Station. Directions will be provided. Ages 11-adult. Registration required.

## 31 Woodcarving Demonstration Saturday, 10am-4pm

Drop by to visit with members of the Southern Missouri Woodcarving Artists as they share information with any "wood-be" carver, demonstrate techniques, and sell some of their art pieces.



# August Events at the Springfield Conservation Nature Center

For programs requiring registration, call 888-4237.

Registration for all programs begins the first day of the month.

**July 3 and August 7**

**HIKED IT ... LIKED IT!**

Enjoy a naturalist-guided hike for families on the first Saturday of each month from 9 to 11am.



## 1 Woodcarving Demonstration

**Sunday, 10am-4pm**

Drop by anytime to visit with members of the Southern Missouri Woodcarving Artists as they share information with the "wood-be" carver, demonstrate carving techniques, show works in progress, and sell some of their art pieces.

## 10 For Adults Only In Search Of ...

**Tuesday, 6-10pm**

Wildlife beat the summer doldrums by avoiding the heat of the day and becoming more active in the evenings. Tonight, we'll carpool to a few local areas in search of amphibians, reptiles, and any other active critters. Meet at the nature center and bring a flashlight and water. Registration required.

## 11 Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

**Wednesday, 11-11:30am**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story. Ages 2-6.

## 13 Nature Investigators Wetland Wrap-Up

**Friday, 4-5pm**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Larry Stuart for the final summer session of Nature Investigators as he wraps-up and reviews the wetland topic. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

## Hiking Club Night Hike

**Friday, 6pm-1am**

Beat the summer heat on this four-mile night hike at Piney Creek Wilderness. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring water, a flashlight, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hike is moderate to difficult. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

## 14 Conservation TEEN Club Wilderness Hike

**Saturday, 9am-4pm**

Pygmy rattlesnakes, roadrunners, and tarantulas are only a few of the animals that call Hercules Glades Wilderness Area home. Come spend the day exploring this area. We'll hike 3 to 4 hours so bring your own water and wear sturdy hiking shoes. Lunch and transportation will be provided. Ages 12-17. Registration required.

## 17 Urban Ecosystem Management

**Tuesday, 7-9pm**

More than half of the problems encountered in urban landscapes are not caused by insects, mites, or disease. Instead, they are a result of compacted soils, drought, stress, over watering, and other factors relating to soil. Join Soil Scientist Dick Henderson and Urban Resource Conservationist DeDe Vest to learn how to effectively manage your urban ecosystem. Ages 14-adult. Registration required.

## 18 Babes In The Woods And Bugs, Too

**Wednesday, 10-10:45am**

Grab your stroller and join the fun! You and your favorite Little Person (0-2 years old) will be introduced to the wonders of the outdoors as well as to the fascinating bugs found there. Registration required.

## 20 Insect-O-Rama

**Friday, 7-9pm**

Insects—they fascinate us, they bug us, they surround us, they bite us—but what would a summer evening be like without them? Join insect specialists and enthusiasts for an evening devoted to discovering insects. Grab your entire family and participate in some creepy-crawly fun! All ages.



Enjoy the "Show-Me Missouri Fish" mobile aquarium and meet the Lewis & Clark dugout canoe crew from Noon to 8pm.

Visit the Conservation Department's building at the Ozark Empire Fair from July 30 to August 8.

## 22 Primitive Skills Series Animal Tracking

**Sunday, 1-3pm**

Primitive skills specialist Don Brink teaches how to identify animal tracks and patterns and how to solve the mystery of where an animal was going, what it was doing, and other clues they leave behind to give us insight into their secretive lives. Ages 10-adult. Registration required.

## 26 Hiking Club

**Thursday, 6-9pm**

Join Volunteer Naturalist Doug Gilliam for an evening hike at Busiek Conservation Area. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Hike is three miles. Ages 18-adult. Registration required.

## Botanical Riches Of Lewis & Clark

**Thursday, 7-8pm**

Ginny Wallace, Master Naturalist Coordinator with the Conservation Department, transports you back in time to learn about Missouri's diverse flora in the early 1800s. Discover how Native Americans and Lewis & Clark used native plants for food, shelter, and medicinal purposes. Ages 12-adult. Registration required.

## 28 Babes In The Woods Goes Exploring

**Saturday, 11-11:45am**

Sacagawea and her baby survived the journey of discovery 200 years ago. Pack up your papoose (0-2 years old) for this guided trail adventure. Registration required.

## 29 Summer Hummers

**Sunday, 4-5:30pm**

Both adult hummingbirds and their young are visiting feeders prior to fall migration. Join hummingbird bander Sarah Driver as she shares her knowledge about Missouri's smallest bird and attempts to capture and band some. Families. Registration required.



## Banding Summer's Hummers

**Sunday, 5:30-7pm**

Stop by and watch hummingbird bander Sarah Driver as she captures and bands these amazing birds. Families.



## Little Acorns . . .

**Little Acorns** programs are for children 3-6 years and are 45-minutes in length. Please limit **Little Acorns** programs to one per month. Registration begins the first day of the month.

### July

#### Hoppin' Hoedown

Grasshoppers provide some of the wonderful insect "music" we hear. Learn how and why they make "music." Join us for a hoppin' good time.

**Tuesday, July 20, 1pm, 3pm or 6pm**

#### Ladybugology

Become a scientist as we study the lives of ladybugs. Not all of these creatures are ladies! Share a story and build a beetle before you fly away home.

**Saturday, July 10, 11am or 1pm**

**Thursday, July 29, 11am**

#### Mudbug Mystery

Have you ever heard of a mudbug? They're small, they live in the water, they have a hard shell, and you can eat them. Still mystified? Come and learn about crawfish and see some up close.

**Friday, July 16, 11am**

**Saturday, July 17, 11am or 1pm**

### August

#### Butterflies vs. Moths

Are all butterflies beautiful? Are all moths mysterious? Do they fly in the daylight or the dark? Are they alike or different? You decide during this fact-filled fun program.

**Saturday, August 28, 1pm**

**Sunday, August 29, 2pm**

#### Cricket Capers

Find out why summer nights are filled with the sound of chirp, chirp, chirping. Join us for a close-up look at an insect we hear more often than we see.

**Wednesday, August 18, 1pm**

**Saturday, August 21, 11am or 1pm**

#### Miniature Music Makers

Grasshoppers, crickets, and katydids provide summer noises. Learn how and why they make "music" and make a little insect music yourself.

**Tuesday, August 10, 11am or 1pm**

**Thursday, August 12, 1pm**

## Back-To-School Bash

# OH, SHOOT!

**Wednesday, August 4, 8am-4pm**

**Held at the Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Training Center**



Educators, what does a day of shotgun, rifle, and archery shooting have in common with your students, the Show-Me Standards, and MAP testing? Just about everything! Let us show you how these activities/skills can provide not only interesting cross-curricular lessons but also valuable lessons in firearm safety and ethics while raising student self-esteem. Lunch, equipment, Show-Me Standards correlations, lesson plans, and certificates of attendance will be provided. Call the nature center at 888-4237 for a flier of the day's activities or to register.



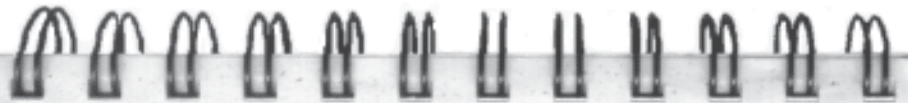
## The Nature Nook Gift Shop . . .

The gift shop's featured special will be the Lewis & Clark DVD and video set. Each will be 20% off in July and August (no other discounts apply).

## Temporary Displays . . .

**July:** Junior Duck Stamp Contest Artwork

**August:** Insect Photography by Entomologist Dr. Thomas J. Riley



## Harbinger Highlights . . .

Defined, harbinger (pronounced här'bīn-jər) is anything that fore-shadows a future event; omen; sign. July and August are the only two full months of official summer. Highlights of summer include long, lazy, warm days full of fun in the sun. As with all highs, there often times are lows. The lowlights of summer might bring to mind ticks and chiggers!

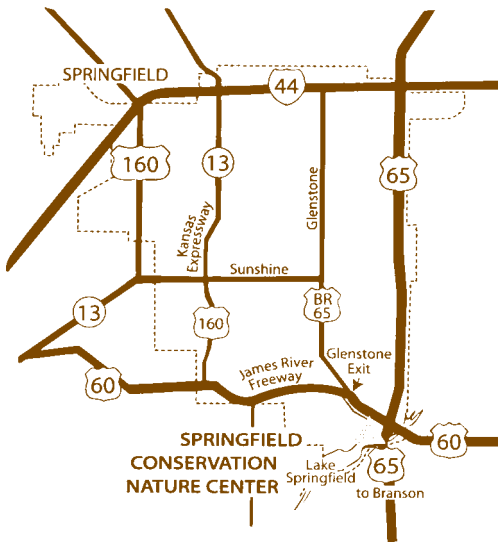


Hiking through tall grass and exploring in the woods is a highlight. Encountering tens of thousands of baby ticks, better known as seed ticks, is a hiker's nightmare. Detecting carbon dioxide as you breathe out, ticks know you are out there. What a joy to view summer's yellow flowers blooming on tickseed coreopsis and beggar ticks and the purplish pink of tick trefoil. What a horror to think of their namesake!



Chigger season begins near the end of May and continues through September. Eating blackberries in July is a highlight while scratching chigger bites from picking those blackberries is a lowlight. It's a delight to the eye when the butterfly weed blooms its bright orange flowers. It's a fright to learn that this plant is also known as chigger-weed or chigger-flower because it blooms during chigger season.

Highs and lows may come and go, but remembering that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" during tick and chigger season can increase the highlights of your summer. (Refer to the cover story for more information.)



**HOURS**—The area is open daily 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. from March 1 to October 31, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the remainder of the year. The building is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. year 'round. The building and area are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The area is closed to pets, bicycles, roller blades, hunting, fishing, collecting, and alcoholic beverages. No fees are charged.

## STAFF

### SPRINGFIELD CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

Linda Chorce	Manager
April Dozier	Interpretive Programs Supervisor
Kim Banner	Naturalist
James Dixon	Naturalist
Donna Legg	Naturalist
Rudy Martinez	Naturalist
Debbie Baker	Office Supervisor
Nelda Hendrix	Administrative Staff Assistant
Cole Chatman	General Clerk
Paula Mangan	Maintenance
Eric McMillan	Maintenance
Dave Rutledge	Maintenance
Mike Tillman	Maintenance
Mike Wilson	Maintenance

Grab the entire family and participate in some creepy-crawly fun . . .

# Insect-O-Rama

**Friday. August 20**

**7-9pm**



Insects--they fascinate us, they bug us, they surround us, they bite us--but what would a summer evening be like without them? Join insect specialists and enthusiasts for an evening devoted to discovering insects.

[<http://www.MissouriConservation.com>](http://www.MissouriConservation.com)

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